

SUBJECT: CIA Operations in Post World War II Albania

1. On 28 September 1993, EA/DCI requested commentary on a Reuters news article (attached) concerning CIA operations in communist Albania in the early 1950's. CIA, British, Greek and Italian intelligence services jointly attempted to insert agents into Albania during that time frame. Our portion of the operation was encrypted BGFIEND. Since the collapse of communism in Albania, some of these agents (or their survivors) have come forward seeking compensation for the work on our behalf. We have determined that we are morally obligated to assist these individuals and are doing so when we can verify participation in BGFIEND. (Agents, handled primarily by one of the other services, are referred to that service for action.) Verification of participation in the operation is a slow and tedious process; the files are old, often incomplete, and must be retrieved from archival storage (they are not retained in computerized data banks). Although Americans trained and dispatched these agents, we have no record of any Americans captured or killed in Albania as a part of this operation. A CIA annuitant who was directly involved in the BGFIEND operation also confirmed that no American lives were lost. A detailed summary of the operation and efforts to compensate the survivors, prepared for the Executive Director on 4 May 1993, is also attached. Contact with and payment to survivors is handled by COS [] [].

2. Regarding the specific names mentioned in the Reuters article: According to a document dated 3 May 1949, Shaqir and Ibrahim KABASHI, and Destan BERISHA, may have been agents in the operation for the Italians. Shaqir has a CIA file and so may have also worked for the Agency. His file is being retrieved from archives for further review. We found only a single name entry referring to a file on Ilmi IBRAHIMI, however the file itself no longer exists. We are already in contact with members of IBRAHAMI'S family.

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